

**Working Paper on public policies in relation to solidarity and spatial cohesion/divide
Denmark**

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National Background Paper “Denmark”

*Working Paper on public policies in relation
to solidarity and spatial cohesion/divide*

WP2

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1 Introduction

Aim of this paper is to outline solidarity structures, practices and culture in Denmark, focussing on vertical and horizontal solidarity within the policy areas of housing, health, education, employment and civic engagement. After a brief description of the historical evolution of the concept of solidarity in Denmark we will focus on its institutional embeddedness in public welfare policy; the relation between unemployment and solidarity; and how different political coalitions have influenced the notion of solidarity in Danish society, taking into account disruptive events such as the financial crisis and increase in immigration. However, the paper will not go into a philosophical discussion on solidarity in Denmark, but rather describe policies and political structures in which spatial solidarity is significantly present.

Solidarity is understood as: “a mode of group cohesion, as a result of which individual members act in unison” (SOLIDUS, 2014, s. 134). Additionally, taking the normative use of the concept into account, solidarity will also be seen as a “human sentiment showing concern for others” which “implies an obligation to different individuals to help each other in case of need” (SOLIDUS, 2014, s. 133). An extended understanding of the concept will be exemplified in the historical overview of solidarity in Denmark, based on vertical and horizontal notions of solidarity.

Vertical solidarity will be defined as solidarity between the “resourceful citizen in contrast to the frail citizen or a stranger” (Juul, 2002, s. 17), which can be institutionalized, distributed and carried out by the state or local government. Thus, in the evolution of the so-called universally oriented institutional welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990) in the wake of World War II solidarity was related to the redistributive power of the welfare state.

Horizontal solidarity on the other hand will be defined as a “a horizontal relation between equals, who stick together because they are interdependent or linked. This relation indicates strong moral obligations towards the group, but not necessarily towards outsiders” (Juul, 2002, s. 17). The notion of “moral obligations” in this definition can be contested, but the emphasis on “horizontal relations” is similar to the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000) and strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973).

Based on these definitions the following section will give an introduction to the history of solidarity in Denmark/ Danish society. The overview will focus on solidarity from the 19th century until today.

2 Solidarity in Denmark in a historical context

In a Danish context, the word “solidarity” dates back to the labour movement of the late 19th century, in the sense of “unbreakable cohesion”, whereas “solidary” is an older term used in a legal context to describe a “shared responsibility” (Christiansen N. F., 1997, s. 10). In order to elaborate on these understandings, the following sections will explain Danish solidarity from a vertical and horizontal point of view.

Vertical solidarity is embedded in Article 75 of the Danish Constitution, written in 1849 and last altered in 1953: “Anyone who can not support himself or her, and if not maintained by the responsibility of anyone else, is entitled to receive public assistance, provided that he shall submit to the obligations by statute in such offers” (Grundloven, 1953), laying the foundation for public assistance. The Danish welfare state was founded on a notion of solidarity derived from a shared nationality, a characteristic inadequate in guaranteeing vertical solidarity in a situation marked by more “liquid forms of modernity” (Bauman, 2007).

The tax-system funding the welfare state contains an element of intergenerational reciprocity, in which generation A transfers resources/ welfare services to generation B, who in the next term secure generation A and C, who then secure generation B and D, etc. (Petersen, 2004, s. 62-63). This reciprocity presumes a sense of social responsibility, for “if the individual does not what he or she can to support themselves, the premise that the community can and will secure provisions for those who cannot fend for themselves crumbles” (Petersen, 2004, s. 62).

Horizontal solidarity first manifested itself in two types of movements that appeared in the 19th century, the farmer and worker co-operative movements. Both had significant impact on the emergence and evolution of the Danish welfare state in the 20th Century, despite their different ideological roots. The ‘socialist workers’ movement’ is related to social-democratic and socialist values, the ‘farmers or Grundtvigian movement’ shaped social-liberal and liberal values.

Folk High Schools – trust, solidarity, and social capital

The farmer co-operative movement was of central importance for the protection and facilitation of farmers’ economic interests. It also served their cultural, educational, and political interests as it was also directly linked to a social movement with major, possibly crucial, influence on the making of modern Danish society: Grundtvigianism and the Danish Folk High Schools (*Højskolebevægelsen*). Even today, more than 140 years after his death, Nicolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), a priest, poet of numerous hymns and poems, bishop, politician, educational rebel, philosopher and member of the Danish constitutional assembly still is an influential actor in Danish politics, and crucial in understanding the distinction between the farmers’ and the workers’ co-operative movement and articulation of solidarity.

Grundtvig founded the first Danish Folk High Schools in 1844, based on the vision of creating a School for Life as opposed to “the school for death”, a way of learning he thought was exercised by traditional grammar schools. The aim of the Folk High School was enlightenment through the spoken word. Both teachers (educators) and farmer-students were collaborating in shaping enlightenment, aimed at broadening the goals of citizenship and integration to all classes of society. One aspect was to facilitate farmer’s participation in politics on local and national level. Another was to work for their economic interests with the formation of co-operatives as a way of gaining control over the conditions that affected the farmers’ life. Already around 1850 the farmers’ movement was saturated with Grundtvig’s idea. In the three years between 1866 and 1869 the folk high school movement experienced its largest period of growth with 44 new schools established around the country. The Folk High Schools served as the necessary generator of trust, solidarity and social capital that were pre-conditions for the economic collaboration in co-operatives and politics.

The ‘Nordic Folk High School Tradition’ had a major impact on the history of education, pedagogics and learning in Denmark and the Nordic countries. Even today, the notion of “lifelong learning” and the connection between learning and democratic values are related to Grundtvig’s original philosophy. Today there are 72 Folk High Schools in Denmark offering free adult education.

Worker co-operative movement

The worker co-operative movement, which did not have any connection with the philosophy of Grundtvig, was another significant part of the historic precondition for the evolution of the Danish welfare state and institutionalised forms of solidarity. Workers and their political interest representation, the Social Democratic Party, were initially reluctant to go down the cooperative way. Even in 1898 the social democratic Congress warned, “where conditions are not favourable, it is extremely dangerous to advance down that road” (DKF, 2004, p. 4).

A number of short-lived production co-operatives were founded during the 1870s, but the first lasting production co-operative, a bakery connected to the workers’ movement, was established in 1884. Since then, the worker co-operative movement has been engaged in production and retail sale of inexpensive quality housing, and the establishment of work places for persons who have difficulties with finding a job. At the end of the 1990s there were about 890 co-operative enterprises with 15,600 employees and an annual turnover of 345 million Euros (24,2 billion DKK). According to the Danish Co-operative Union 1,2 million citizens were living in co-operative housing in the year 2000. “For 20% of the population the co-operative movement is a concrete expression of the worker movement’s policy, that is present in their everyday-life. They know that without the housing co-operatives rent would much higher” (DKF, 2004).

Especially during the first half of the 20th century, cooperatives related to the workers’ movement were horizontal models of solidarity, since they were built to provide their

members with work, safety nets and social services, all related to the Social Democratic Party:

It was a good and safe party to be a part of: it secured life content, entertainment and challenges galore. You started in DUI and continued in DSU – the party union. You could sing in the workers' choir, get a haircut at the "Figaro Salons", and drink "Star" [a brewery, red.], read social democratic newspapers, magazines, and books from *Fremad* [a publishing house, red.]. The worker cooperative movement handled your money and insurances, and when you had heard your last broadcast from the party's national radio, on your ARAKO-device, when you, in other words, kick the bucket the Labours' Cremation took care of the rest (Christiansen N. F., 1997, s. 14).

Cooperatives like the Star brewery that existed from 1902 to 1964 were important elements in transforming horizontal solidarity articulated by the workers into vertical solidarity articulated by labour market policies and the gradual emergence of the universal welfare state. Thus, the Star brewery was an example how cooperative enterprises were able to pave the way for improved living conditions in society as such through wage policies and engagement in improving working conditions (Månsson, 2003).

Thus, workers' organisations took care of workers from cradle to grave until the emergence of vertical solidarity provided by the state in form of social welfare and protection policies. The state is involved in the practical dimension of Danish vertical solidarity on a local, regional and national level. In order to give the reader an understanding of how the Danish political system works the following section will describe the Danish political system on the three spatial levels as well as Denmark's relationship to the European Union.

3 The Danish Political System

Denmark has a population of 5.6 million people. Officially it is a constitutional monarchy, with the royal family exercising a purely ceremonial role. The country is governed by the parliament, *Folketing*. Members of parliament are selected by proportional elections for a maximum of four years (Folketinget, 2015). The Danish political system is divided in three spatial levels: the national parliament, regional governments and local government.

Annual data	2014 ^a Historical averages (%)	2010–14
Population (m)	5.6 Population growth	0.4
GDP (US\$ bn; market exchange rate)	342.4 Real GDP growth	0.5
GDP (US\$ bn; purchasing power parity)	253.3 Real domestic demand growth	0.6
GDP per head (US\$; market exchange rate)	60,627 Inflation	1.8
GDP per head (US\$; purchasing power parity)	44,857 Current-account balance (% of GDP)	6.2
Exchange rate (av) Dkr:US\$	5.6 FDI inflows (% of GDP)	0.1

^a Actual.

(The Economist, 2015)

3.1 National level

Folketinget (The Danish Parliament) consists of 179 members, including two representatives from Greenland and the Faroe Islands respectively. Governments are usually minority-coalition governments, supported by other political parties from the same 'wing'. Broad political agreements across wings are relatively common. Only residents holding Danish citizenships are entitled to participate in national elections. Residents without Danish nationality with permanent residency in Denmark can vote in regional municipal elections (borger.dk, 2015). The Folketing passes overall legislation (e.g. on social, healthcare and education policies) for the country, while the five regions and 98 municipalities within the regions have a share of approximately 70% of public spending.

As of June 2015, the Liberal Party forms a minority government, holding just 34 of the 179 seats. It is supported by three right-wing parties: the Danish People's Party (37 mandates), the Conservative Party (6 mandates) and the Liberal Alliance (13 mandates) (Folketinget, 2015).

The opposition consists of the Social Democrats, who after the 2015 election is the biggest party in the Folketing with 47 mandates, the Danish Social Liberal Party (8 mandates), Socialist People's Party (7 mandates), the Red-Green Alliance (14 mandates) and the Alternative (9 mandates) (Folketinget, 2015).

Previous governments and their impact on the welfare state

Before the current government, a minority centre-left coalition was formed in 2011, lead by the first female prime minister, Social Democrat Helle Thorning-Schmidt, taking over after a decade the minority right-wing Fogh-Rasmussen-administration (2001-2011), who ruled based on support the nationalist Danish People's Party. The Fogh-Rasmussen administration lowered personal income tax, reformed the regional and local governmental structure, and tightened the public spending, which led to a growing dissatisfaction with the public service, a discourse still present in Denmark (denstoredanske, 2015).

From 1993-2001 a Social-Democratic coalition government led by Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, held the cabinet. The administration successfully implemented a number of proactive efforts to promote growth and employment, the flexicurity model (see employment chapter) and a 15% top tax for persons with a yearly income over 5,643.43 Euro in addition to the ordinary tax level (Ministry of Treasury, 2014) (denstoredanske, 2013). Concerning vertical solidarity, Denmark has one of the highest tax levels in the world with an average of 46.1% per capita, and 23.5% corporate tax. However, the corporate tax is expected to be reduced to 22% as of 2016, except for entities in oil and gas (Deloitte, 2015).

3.2 Changes in the Danish welfare state

Internationally, Denmark and the Nordic countries in general have been known as state-friendly societies in the sense of success with building a post war institutional-redistributive model of welfare state (Titmuss, 1987) or Social Democratic welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The high level of trust and social capital in the Nordic countries is largely due to a balanced development between active, dynamic and cooperative societal sectors (state, market and civil society). Historically, the typical Scandinavian welfare state facilitates a relationship between civil society and state that nourishes bridging social capital that is more related to citizens than to members and volunteers as in more conservative and liberal welfare regimes. The generation of the institutional-redistributive welfare state in Denmark was based upon institutions that did encourage people to perceive themselves as being members of a broader national community rather than merely worrying about their own family, neighbours, and their immediate benefits.

There have been changes, however, from the collective mass movements of the heydays of the universal welfare state in the 1960s towards “organized individualism” (Rothstein, 2001). This transition reflects a change from a “mass-organizational” society in direction of a new type of collectivism, where the individual is more dominant. This change can be found in all Scandinavian countries in the behaviour of citizens engaged in organizations in civil society (Selle, 1999). Measured in numbers we do find a weakening of collective ideological movements, e.g. membership of political parties, free churches, temperance movement, and the labour movement, while both the organizational landscape and the way people get involved is much more diversified today than it was in the peak period of the welfare state. Thus, the close historical connection between social movements and the public sector in state-friendly Scandinavian country like Denmark may be about to change. Whereas the typical “hybrid character” of civil society in the 20th century “could be described in terms of ‘half movement’ half government”, the character of the more recent civil society developments could maybe instead be understood as a drive towards organizational solutions being of ‘half charity, half business’ character” (Wijkström, 2011). Accordingly, in recent decades, there have been rather dramatic changes towards individualization and privatization of welfare and citizenship in the Danish welfare system. The changes are reflected both in the organizational behaviour of citizens engaged in organizations in civil society (Selle, 1999) and in a gradual change of the “traditional” Social Democratic welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990) towards “rampant privatization” (Pestoff, 2009). This may indicate a fundamental alteration of the existing framework for social policies. Indeed, policies previously framed by a universal approach to publicly delivered benefits, designed to protect labour against the vicissitudes of the market and firmly held as social rights (Titmuss, 1987), are currently evolving into policies framed by a selective approach to private delivery of provisions designed to promote labour force participation and individual responsibility (Gilbert, 2002, p. 4).

More specifically, what is occurring is a shift towards work-oriented policies, with a privatization of the responsibility for social welfare and an increase in the targeting of benefits. In terms of citizenship and composition of civil society, it is a shift from an emphasis on the social rights linked to citizenship to the civic duties linked to being a community member, providing space for active citizens to become active volunteers and

successful social entrepreneurs. Accordingly, Evers observes a general societal trend towards the economic dimension of civil society as a third sector for service provision that may lead to a re-traditionalization and paternalization of welfare (Evers, 2013). In contemporary Danish policies on civil society the democratic dimension of civil society is missing. In the “National Civil Society Strategy” adopted by the Danish government in 2010, there is a one-sided focus on the role of civil society organizations in the provision of social services, whereas the political, democratic, governance and rights oriented dimensions of civil society are neglected.

A few pieces of evidence may indicate the level of change towards general privatization and accordingly towards more entrepreneurial and service providing paradigms for civil society as experienced in Scandinavian countries. In Sweden, the government’s share of GDP measured as public spending reached as high as 67% of GDP in 1993. Already in 1974 the Swedish Prime Minister had declared the end of the era of neo-capitalism. “It is some kind of socialism that is the key to the future” (Economist, 2013). His lookout point was several decades of almost complete Social Democratic hegemony with the party ruling uninterrupted between 1932 and 1976. Since then the Scandinavian countries have changed course in the composition of welfare policies. In Sweden, government’s share of GDP “which has dropped by around 18 percentage points, is lower than France’s and could soon be lower than Britain’s” (Economist, 2013) and in Denmark CEVEA (a think tank) has stressed that the country’s position as the most equal country in the world lies in the past.

Between 2004 and 2011 Denmark is apparently the country in Western Europe where inequality has risen most sharply. Still, in a longer perspective Denmark is one of the most equal societies, measured by the Gini coefficient, but was only the 14th most equal society in Europe in 2014. Whereas the Scandinavian welfare state was marked by a close collaboration between the institutional redistributive orientation of the public sector and civil society organizations, today “Nordic civil society organizations are increasingly turning towards the business sphere” facilitated by a “simultaneous introduction of ‘charity speak’ and ‘business talk’ in many of the organizations” (Wijkström, 2011, pp. 27, 48).

3.3 The Regions

The Danish State administration and democracy has traditionally been built on the principles of decentralised local governance, with maximum autonomy for the municipal and regional bodies. Implementing legislation from the *Folketing*, the five regions (Hovedstaden, Midtjylland, Syddanmark, Sjælland and Nordjylland¹) are responsible for healthcare, operation of social and special education institutions, regional development (business, education, culture), public transport, tourism, and other comprehensive task that require decentralized solutions, such as soil pollution management or climate change adaptation (Ministry of Finance, 2015). Each Regional Council has 41 members elected for a four-

¹ The Capital Region, Zealand, Southern Denmark, Central Denmark and North Denmark.

year period, of which 11-19 members are a part of the Executive Committee. The president of the region is elected by the Regional Council (regioner.dk, 2015). The five regions have between 600,000 and 1.5 million inhabitants (Andersen P. T.-J., 2010, s. 248). They are financed by government block grants and the municipalities' tax-collection (Christiansen T. , 2012, s. 115).

The Danish Committee of Regions has a representation office in Brussels with nine representatives to lobby for and secure Danish regional interests and stakeholders in EU.

3.4 The local level

There are 98 municipalities. Each municipality is operating at the forefront of social and spatial solidarity requirements. It is responsible for the delivery of social services (financing, supply and authority), primary schools (including special education), geriatric care, health (prevention, care and rehabilitation that does not take place during hospitalization, treatment of alcohol and drug abuse, home care, dental care and social psychiatry), activation and employment projects for insured and uninsured unemployed, emergency preparedness, integration and language education for immigrants, citizen service, taxation and tax collection in cooperation with state tax centres, libraries, musical education programmes, local sport facilities and other cultural areas (Ministry of Finance, 2015).

Each municipality is managed by the City Council and led by the major, who in most municipalities is the only full-time employed politician in the municipality. The City Council consists of an unequal number of participants. The municipal administration is led by the City Manager. The average municipality has 55,000 inhabitants (Andersen P. T.-J., 2010, s. 248).

3.5 Denmark and the EU

Denmark joined the European Union in 1973, but negotiated four opt-outs from the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Denmark refused to adopt any notion of European citizenship at the expense of the Danish citizenship, irrelevant due to the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, which states that EU-citizenship could only supplement the existing citizenship, not replace it. More relevant, Denmark is not a part of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The reservation was put to a referendum with a majority vote against the adoption of the Euro. However, Denmark is a part of the EMU's second phase, coordinating monetary policies by strengthening cooperation between the national central banks.

On basis of the Edinburgh-decision, Denmark does not participate in the elaboration or implementation of decisions and actions of the EU that has defence implications. Therefore, Denmark does not support EU military actions financially. In the same vein, due to the Justice and Home Affairs stipulation Denmark only participates in EU intergovernmental cooperation, and not in supranational level decisions that require majority votes, without prior approval in each national parliament. Furthermore, Denmark has only been able to connect to the EU's decisions on asylum policies via individual

agreements. This stipulation will be put to a referendum on December 3rd 2015 (Fenger-Grøndahl, 2008).

The following chapters will outline vertical and horizontal solidarity structures in the five policy areas SOLIDUS selected for investigation: healthcare, housing, employment, education and civic engagement. Considering the trend of co-production of welfare services to private and civil society based providers we see a shift from top-down vertical policies promoting solidarity to a model promoting horizontal solidarity practices, as well as bottom-up policy development responding to solidarity-based forms of social action.

4 Spatial solidarity in healthcare

The following section will outline the Danish healthcare system on the three spatial levels: national, regional and local, focussing on the Danish Healthcare System (DHS), somatic and psychiatric hospitals as responsibility of the regions, municipalities' responsibilities for preventive healthcare, and touching on co-production of health care services together with third sector organisations. Despite the increase in private health insurance the overall assumption for this chapter is that free and universal healthcare is an example of vertical solidarity in Denmark.

The Danish Healthcare System (DHS)

The Danish Healthcare System (DHS) is, like in other Nordic countries, based on the universal model, in which “all citizens have access to the services, the services are channelled through or controlled by public institutions, and the services are tax-funded” (Andersen P. T.-J., 2010, s. 247). Everyone registered at the National Registry has access to the DSH. Danish citizens are born with the right to free healthcare, whereas newcomers have to apply for a social security number in order to be treated in the DSH for free. Asylum seekers have access to a parallel system, managed by asylum seeker centres, financed by the Immigration Service. Emergency care is available independent of citizenship (Jensen, 2011, s. 4). DHS services are carried out decentralized by regions and municipalities.

DHS reform

In 2007, the Danish healthcare system was reformed under Liberal-Conservative rule. The new Healthcare Law introduced new spatial structures. Regions are responsible for somatic and psychiatric hospitals along with the general practise and emergency medical response. Former responsibilities, such as health promotion and prevention, were either reduced or moved to the municipalities or to state level (Andersen P. T.-J., 2010, s. 248). However, the number of acute hospitals was also reduced in order to create highly specialised hospitals with 24-hour emergency wards. The Ministry of Health sat aside 3 billion Euros for this purpose (Christiansen T. , 2012, s. 116).

In 2012 the Central-Left coalition government promised a 24-hour diagnose guarantee. If the local hospital is unable to do so, the patient has the right to go to a hospital in another

region or a private clinic (Information, 2012). Due to the political promises and strategies, it is the regions' job to implement the decision (Christiansen T. , 2012, s. 116). However, regional hospitals depend on municipalities and the state budget to run hospitals together with state grants, blurring spatial boundaries of responsibility (Systime, 2012). The Danish Regions estimate that 95 out of 100 Danes use the DHS each year. The DHS spends 13.81 billion Euros each year, equal to 2479.89 Euros per capita. Overall the money is spent on hospitals (80%), general practise (15%) and medicine grants (5%) (regioner.dk, 2015).

Private health insurance

Private health care and the use of private hospitals have increased (Christiansen T. , 2012, s. 114) as part of a general trend towards individualization and privatization of the welfare state. In 2002, Denmark implemented tax exemptions for employer contributions to voluntary health insurance (VHI) schemes, later eliminated by the centre-left coalition government in 2011. It also reduced the rates paid to private hospitals and encouraged the regions to use public bids and contracting instead. These changes have reduced public payment for private providers and led to a reduction of private hospitals (Lehto, 2015)), showing the influence of political ideology even on policy fields that are relatively stable.

However, during the last 10 years, 2.9 million Danes have signed a private health insurance that either covers the whole or parts of the hospital fee, as an addition to the public healthcare system. Liberal think-tank CEPOS claims the trend towards privatization causes a solidary spill-over effect, since it “benefit those who do not have a [private] health insurance, it means that some, so to speak, “step out of the queue”, meaning that [public] waiting lists will be reduced making space for people who will get a faster service at public hospitals” (CEPOS, 2014). This analysis is debatable in light of the tax exemptions for VHIs, lowering the national tax income. The implementation of private hospitals may rather be seen as part of a general trend away from the universal welfare state towards a liberal and more residual version based on group solidarity (bonding social capital).

Municipalities are responsible for a number of citizen-related tasks such as prevention, health promotion, and dental care for citizens under the age of 18, home-nursing treatment of alcohol abuse and drug addiction. Since 2008 they also offer free physiotherapy, devolved from the regions. Home nursing is also a free service for citizens, providing care for elders with chronic or acute illnesses or disabilities in their own home or in nursing homes, depending on the citizen's wishes. It is at this level that third sector based initiatives, often hybrid in character, appear as co-producers of health services, using highly innovative approaches or offering traditional care or advocacy services. About 40 % of Danish social enterprises are providing health care services (European Commission, 2014).

Three initiatives presented as part of the Danish solidarity practice inventory are mentioned in this context. *The Social Network* works at local and national levels to remove and prevent prejudices about mental illnesses and to create a better understanding and more coherent approach to people who are mentally ill, working with mentally ill people

and their relatives, creating awareness and advocating for funds to the mental health services (The Social Network, 2015). *Cycling Without Age* collaborates with retirement homes to offer rickshaw rides to elders, carried out by volunteers, preventing loneliness and alienation from society (Cycling Without Age Denmark, 2015). *The Food Bank* is an organisation that uses volunteers to collect surplus food and distributes it to vulnerable groups, such as homeless, drug addicts, mentally ill, etc., preventing food poverty and fighting malnutrition amongst the target groups (The Food Bank, 2014).

5 Housing

The following section describes living conditions in light of the demographic development in Denmark. Describing interest groups in Denmark in the policy area of housing, regional developments and the distribution of different types of housing it gives an impression of the Danish housing landscape, including housing assistance and housing for refugees and other vulnerable groups at municipal level.

On national level, housing policies and programmes are responsibility of the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing (formed after the election in June 2015, replacing the Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Districts). There are 2,775,485 housing units in Denmark, of which 2,612,049 are occupied. According to Statistics Denmark 59% of the Danish population live in privately owned dwellings (for cooperative housing see [Workers' co-operative movement](#)). The average household has decreased from 2.5 persons in 1981 to 2.1 in 2015 (Statistics Denmark, 2015, s. 1). The table below shows a long-standing trend of urbanisation; population in rural districts and villages with less than 500 inhabitants are decreasing, despite an overall population growth, while the number of inhabitants in urban areas keeps rising. This has triggered a public discourse distinguishing cities from “*outskirts Denmark*”, describing areas with little or no development, a shrinking population with few resources or low education. Consequently, in October 2015 the current government presented a much disputed plan to move 10% of the state jobs provincial areas, in order to strengthen the incentive for people with higher education to move to areas in question (Ministry of Finance, 2015).

Figure 1: Demographic development: Urban and rural population, 2015.

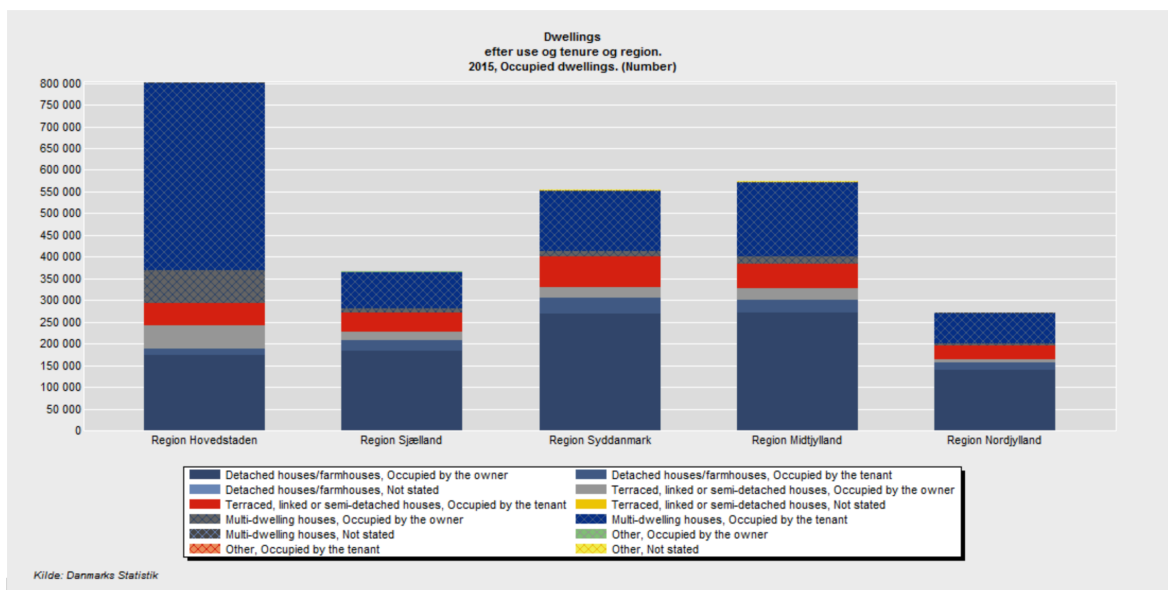
1 January	1901	1921	1940	1960	1970	1981	1990	2000	2010	2015
All Denmark	2 449 540	3 269 554	3 844 312	4 585 256	4 937 579	5 123 989	5 135 409	5 330 020	5 534 738	5 659 715
The Greater Copenhagen ¹	491 276	700 610	1 021 499	1 289 406	1 380 204	1 381 882	1 337 114	1 075 851	1 181 239	1 263 698
Other urban areas with:										
Over 100 000 inhabitants	-	-	127 366	307 067	459 669	432 778	452 773	481 939	511 531	545 879
10 000-99 999 inhabitants	250 830	547 364	691 891	913 860	998 485	1 024 886	1 067 874	1 353 546	1 475 691	1 518 203
1 000-9 999 inhabitants	273 129	374 295	388 172	513 030	688 789	1 021 714	1 085 531	1 194 188	1 212 254	1 215 193
500-999 inhabitants	33 866	99 437	123 697	160 066	202 905	237 774	227 478	244 131	223 153	221 610
200-499 inhabitants	11 370	82 384	103 345	209 915	216 105	198 058	185 669	183 995	193 897	186 152
Rural districts	1 389 069	1 465 464	1 388 342	1 191 912	991 422	826 897	778 970	796 370	728 882	698 897
No fixed address	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8 091	10 083

¹ In 1999, 12 municipalities comprising 40 towns were no longer included in Greater Copenhagen region.

(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

The chart below shows the type of dwelling by region from 2010 to 2015. There is a major proportion of owner-occupied flats in Region Hovedstaden (the Greater Copenhagen Area), followed by Region Midtjylland. The two regions host the two largest cities in Denmark, Copenhagen and Aarhus. However, the provincial regions have a higher proportion of owner occupied dwellings compared to the population. In the larger cities in Denmark, housing cooperatives are common in apartment buildings where tenants own the building together and pay rent to the cooperative in question (KAB, n.d.) (Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing , 2015).

Figure 2: The regional distribution after type of dwelling, ownership and residential status, 2015.



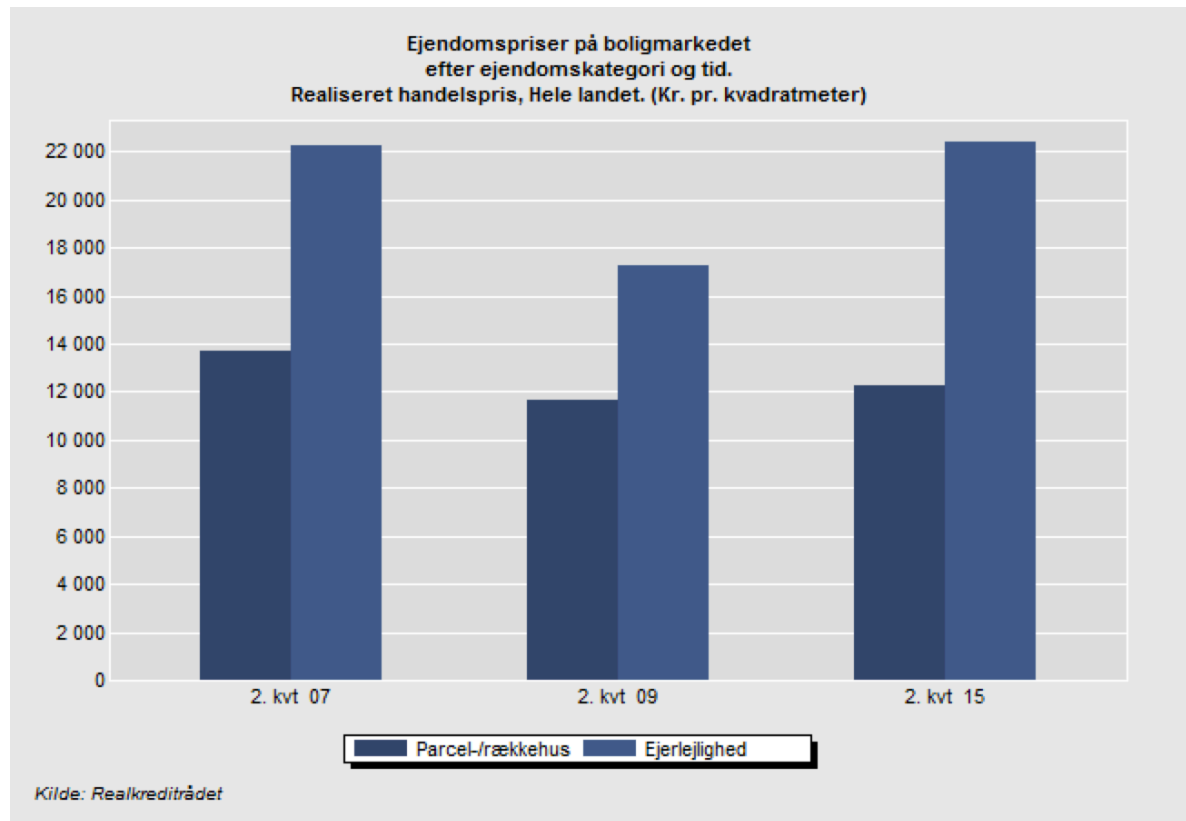
(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

Municipalities are responsible to offer housing to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, such as elders without savings or people with disabilities. They provide sheltered housing to citizens with mental illness and must offer affordable housing for students (The Social Services, 2015). Municipalities manage the housing assistance paid to pensioners and low-income tenants (borger.dk, 2015). They are also responsible for finding permanent housing for refugees with a residence permit (KL, 2014).

Housing prices in the Greater Copenhagen Area have soared in recent years, making affordable housing difficult to find even for middle-class people. However, since the recession in 2008 only housing prices for single family homes have fallen slightly, In 2006, former Mayor of Copenhagen Ritt Bjerregaard promised to build 5,000 flats for 5,000 DKK (670 Euros) a month. This promise failed due to the refusal by former Minister of Interior and current Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen to sell the municipality's land under market price, (Politiken, 2005) (Altinget, 2009). The current Mayor of Copenhagen, Frank Jensen, plans to build 3,600 public housing units during the next 10 years, but fears that the current government will pull back the Affordable Housing Act: "If

we do not make sure to build these homes, we will cultivate a distorted city for the rich only. It is not what we want” (Altinget, 2015).

Figure 3: Property prices in the housing market by property category and time, realized market price throughout the country, DKK per square meter. Dark blue: Single family home. Light blue: Condominium.



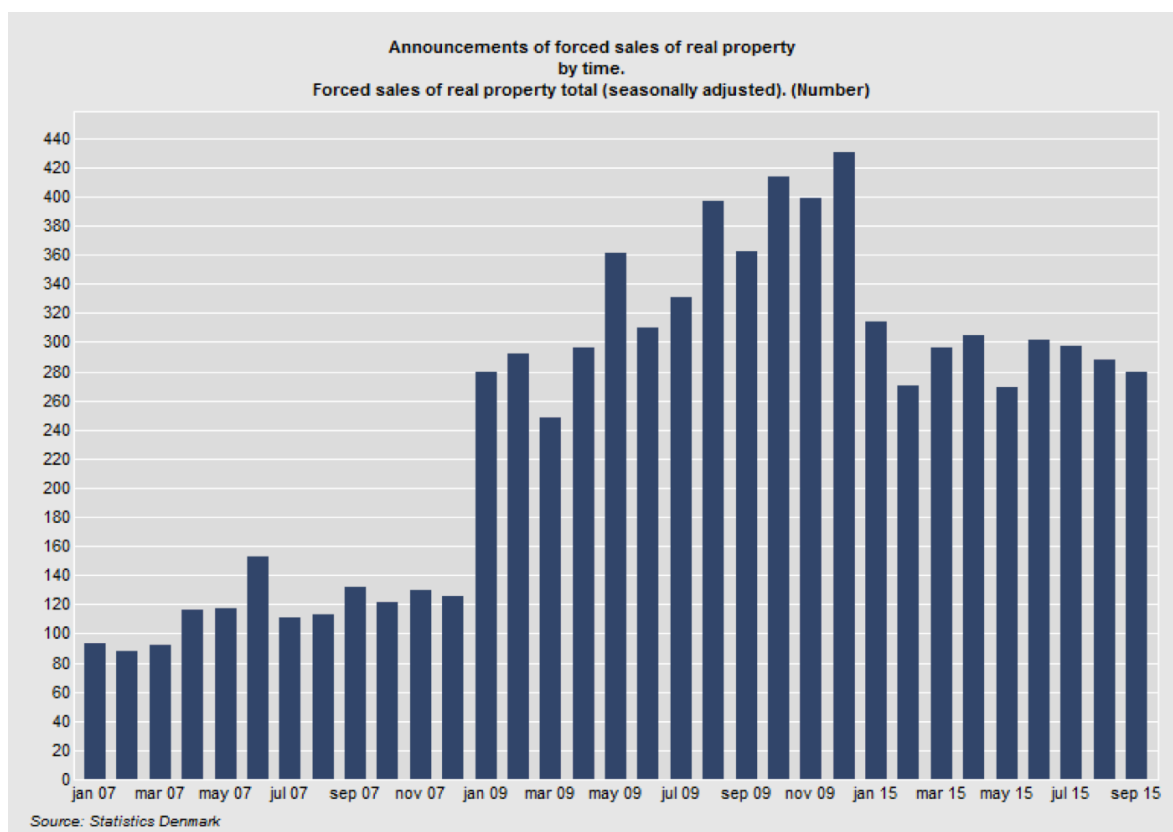
(Association of Danish Mortgage Banks, 2015)

At the same time inner-town areas like Nørrebro in Copenhagen are considered socially deprived areas, with 25 per cent of inhabitants with origins in “non-Western” countries with low spatial or social mobility. Public discourse used to refer to these areas as „ethnic ghettos“, leading to a national government “Strategy against ghettoization” (*Regeringens strategi mod ghettoisering*), the distribution of flats to newcomers across a number of housing estates, selected by a so-called Programme Committee (*Programbestyrelsen*). In 2010 the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs identified 29 “ghettos” in Denmark, of which 10 are in Copenhagen City (Open Society Foundations, 2011).

The number of forced sales has also increased significantly since 2007, however decreased compared to 2009. The graph below shows the total number of forced sales in Denmark before the recession in 2007, rising numbers of forced sales in the aftermath in 2009, and the current decrease in number of forced sales in 2015. Nonetheless, the forced sales are unevenly distributed the Western and Southern parts of the country. Zealand represents 27% of the total number of forced sales. The same area has also experienced a decrease in housing prices since the recession and a lack of demand, making it difficult for the house

owners to sell their houses. The house prices are 14% below the national average, and 37% lower than the top (Association of Danish Mortgage Banks, 2015).

Figure 4: Announcements of forced sales of real property by time and in total



(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

An important civil society organisation active in supporting tenants in relation to housing is the Tenant's Association (*Lejernes Landsorganisation*, LLO), defending tenants' rights, providing legal aid, counselling and advocacy activities on both a local and national level since 1966. It is organised in independent branches by volunteers and employees and is present in most cities (LLO, n.d.). LLO sees rental homes as a corner stone in the Danish housing market, complementing the Danish flexicurity model, making it easy for the labour force to move according to available jobs without large expenses or potential losses from selling a house under market price. Since January 1992, landlords of new housing are no longer forced to level the rent due to cost determined factors (square meter price per year), which makes it harder for middleclass and low-income families to find affordable rental housing in the cities. Although the total number of rentals is falling, LLO has seen an increase in membership (approx. 52.000). According to head of LLO Helene Toxværd there is overall political consensus in the Folketing that ensuring affordable rental homes is a cornerstone in the Danish welfare state.

Another non-governmental actor in the field of housing is *Realdania*, a member-based philanthropic organization that dates back to 1795 after the great Copenhagen fire. It got its current organisational form in 2000 when RealDanmark and Danske Bank merged to Realdania. The organisation's philanthropic investments aim to enhance life quality in urban and rural areas by renovation and building projects, creating value for a wide range of people. The projects in question must be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable (Realdania, 2015).

6 Employment

This section describes the structure of the Danish labour market, mechanisms to deal with unemployment and policy initiatives to help people back to employment. A hire and fire system is balanced by institutionalised vertical solidarity structures and the state has initiated a number of policy initiatives supporting horizontal solidarity actions in employment.

The Danish model - flexicurity

There is an unwritten agreement between national government and the labour market that employers and the unions negotiate directly with one another, without the interference from the state or the courts. The employer has the right to manage and distribute work and the trade unions have the right to organise the workforce. The parties then decide a collective agreement on pay, work hours and conditions. If they fail to reach agreement both parties have the right to go on strike or lock-out until they can negotiate a new agreement (CEVEA, 2012). However, the state has influenced the Danish labour market possibly most significantly with the implementation of the flexicurity model.

The flexicurity model, or *the Danish model*, was implemented under the Social Democrats in the 1990's. It is built on three corner stones: a flexible labour market; income security; and an active employment system - and the assumption that neither can work without the

others. The model makes it easy for employers to hire and fire work force depending on demand. It is regarded a success due to low youth unemployment (10.4%), low long-term unemployment (25%), and overall relatively low unemployment and low structural unemployment (6.3%) (see graphs below) (Ministry of Employment, 2015) (OECD, 2015, s. 1). If fired, the employee is supported with a social security net of unemployment benefits. In 2013 Denmark spent 1.8% of GDP on labour market programmes.

Figure 5: Labour force status over time



(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

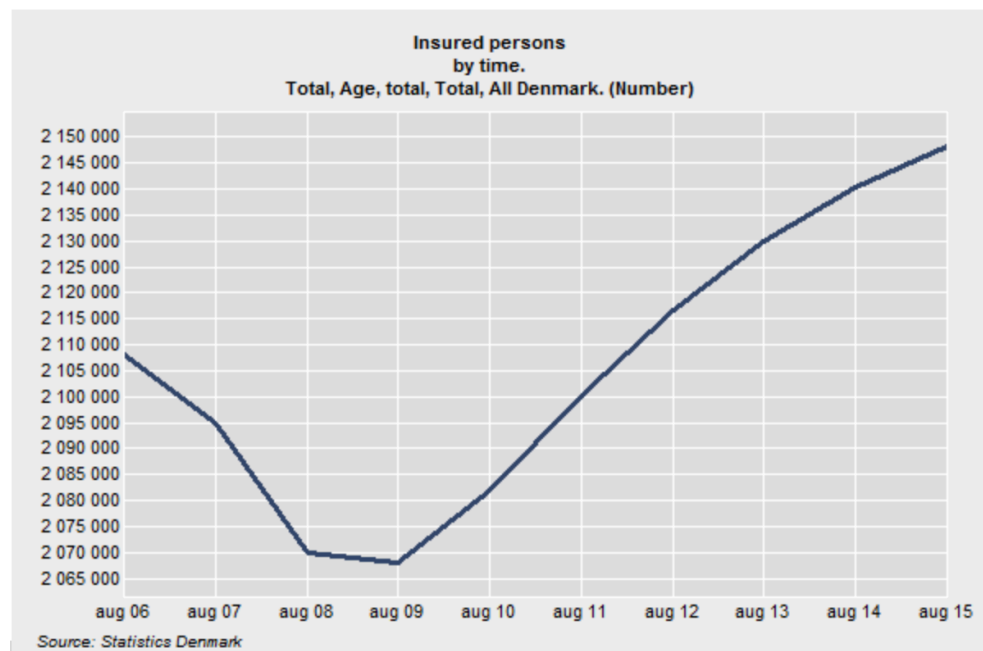
Unemployment insurance in Denmark

There is little protection against dismissal in Danish employment contracts in comparison to other European countries. A notice period of a few weeks and rarely longer than three months is considered normal. Consequently, more than 2 million Danes have unemployment insurance (see the line chart below), a voluntary system managed by the “*a-kasser*” (unemployment insurance funds), to provide economic support in case of job loss in addition to unemployment benefits paid by the state. (Ministry of Employment, 2015).

For a long time, the Danish unemployment system was considered to be one of the best in the world. Unemployment benefits cover up to 90% of the original salary, but not more than 100.8 Euros per day, before taxes, per person with unemployment insurance. A person available to the labour market but unable to find a job, can receive unemployment benefits for up to two years within three years (CEVEA, 2012) (Ministry of Employment, n.d.). In absence of unemployment insurance, the person is entitled to receive social benefits from the municipality (Ministry of Employment, 2015).

However, in 2010, the Thorning-Schmidt-administration reformed unemployment benefits with support from the Danish People’s Party, reducing the period from four to two years, the regain period (in which the employer gain or regain the right to the benefit) was harmonised to 52 weeks of employment within three years for a full coverage. Benefits are calculated based on the income of the last three to 12 months prior to unemployment (3F, 2010).

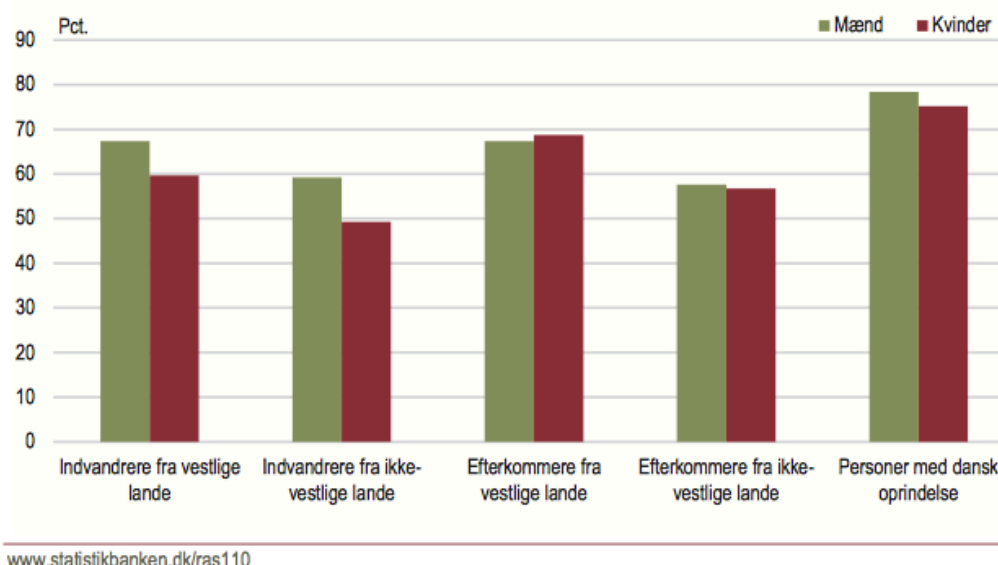
Figure 6: Number of people in Denmark with unemployment insurance.



(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

Figure 7: The employment rate for immigrants and descendants, 2013. Green: Male, Red: Female. First column from the left: 1st: Immigrants from Western countries. 2nd:

Immigrants from non-Western countries. 3rd: Descendants from Western countries. 4th: Descendants from non-Western countries. 5th: Persons with Danish origin.



(Statistics Denmark, 2014, s. 177)

The employment rate for immigrants and descendants of immigrants from both Western and non-Western societies is lower than the employment rate for people of Danish decedence. However, this is also due to the groups of descendants, who are in the educational system (Statistics Denmark, 2014, s. 177).

Regions employ health personnel and must therefore negotiate wages and working conditions for the healthcare sector. Apart from that they have no further engagement in employment policy.

Municipalities are running the job centre to assist unemployed to find employment. There is a jobcentre in each municipality in Denmark. They have a special focus on unemployed youth under 30byears without vocational education. The aim is to prepare the person for either education or a job. In exchange the person can receive social benefits, if unable to support him- or herself economically, while in the process (borger.dk, 2015).

In Denmark more people between 16 and 65 years of age are in employment than the OECD average (75% compared to 65% in 2014) (OECD , 2014), but nevertheless the country has launched a number of social and active employment programmes over the years o create more jobs for the socially disadvantaged or in the rural areas with dwindling population numbers.

In 1988 the Danish government launched the “Social Development Programmes”, promoting the restructuring of social policy by strengthening local communities and voluntary organisations, including work integration organisations (WISEs) (Hulgård, 2008). These are organisations usually rooted in traditional civil society who provide employment people disadvantaged or excluded from the labour market. 31 per cent of

WISEs employ individuals with a disability, 40 per cent of enterprises employ individuals with a mental illness. Over a quarter of WISEs also employ individuals who are homeless, alcoholic, drug addicts or prostitutes. Employment in WISEs can be on a permanent basis or as part of active labour market policies ((European Commission, 2014b)). The current Ministry of Employment allocated funds for a current programme supporting WISEs working with disadvantaged people (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2015).

The 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme, largely funded by the European Commission Structural Fund, co-financed by the Danish government, aims at increasing sustainable and organic farming, training and creating at least 1300 new jobs in rural areas. The programme addresses an identified “lack of innovators and entrepreneurs in rural areas”, ascribed to the low employment rate in the agricultural sector European (European Commission, 2014)

Danish family policies entitle parents to 32 weeks of parental leave each. Mothers can take up to four weeks of maternity leave before the expected date of birth and 14 weeks after. Fathers are entitled to two weeks of parental leave within the first 14 weeks. Parents can receive up to 52 weeks of benefits from the State. In 2014, the level of leave benefits was 28,4800.26 Euros for 52 weeks. Employees are protected against dismissal during parental leave by reverse burden of proof, meaning that the employer must prove that the dismissal is unrelated to maternity leave (European Union, 2015).

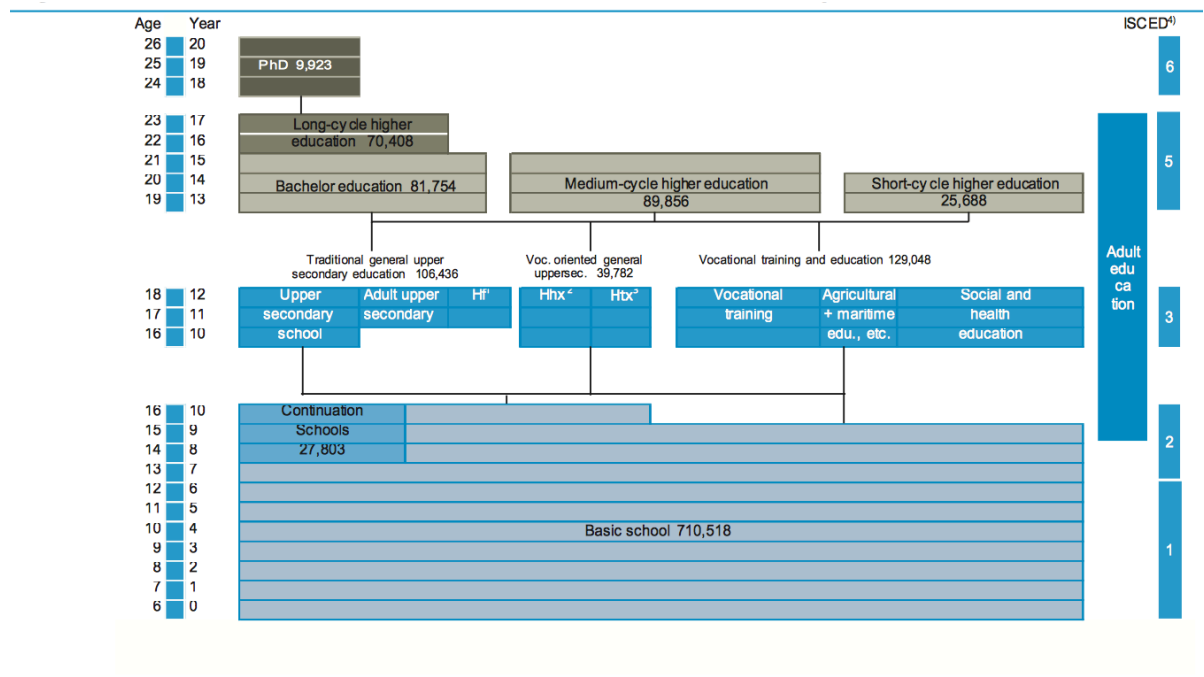
7 Education

This section describes the Danish educational system as an example of direct vertical solidarity providing the possibility of social permeability through education, regardless of economic or cultural class affiliation due to its open access. However, social background does affect educational success, and the increase in private education institutions might pose a threat to Grundtvig’s ideal of equal opportunities for all.

The Danish school system

Primary school (*Folkeskole*) and the right to free education are anchored in § 76 of the Danish Constitution (Grundloven, 1953). It is mandatory to attend and follow the educational system until at least 7th grade (Legal Information, 2014, s. §33). The figure below shows the structure of the Danish school system. The scale on the left shows the minimum amount of years a student has been educated to complete the level, along with the estimated age of the student (Statistics Denmark, 2015, s. 2). The right hand column shows the placement in the international education system.

Figure 8: Number of students in the educational system, 1 October 2014. Structure of the Danish educational system and number of students graduating



¹Higher preparatory examination. ² Higher commercial examination. ³Higher technical examination.

⁴International Standard Classification of Education

(Statistics Denmark, 2015)

The average student graduates from the *Folkeskole* after 9th or 10th grade and continues to either upper-secondary school (gymnasium) for another two years, or a vocational training. Afterwards, they either enter professional life or go to university to finish with a master's degree before entering the labour market.

Although municipalities run the schools, the child's education and development is based on collaboration between the parents and the school (Legal Information, 2014, s. §1), deeply rooted in Danish educational culture. Collaboration also serves to support the five principles of the Danish school system: education for all, high standards, lifelong learning, active participation and project work (Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 2015).

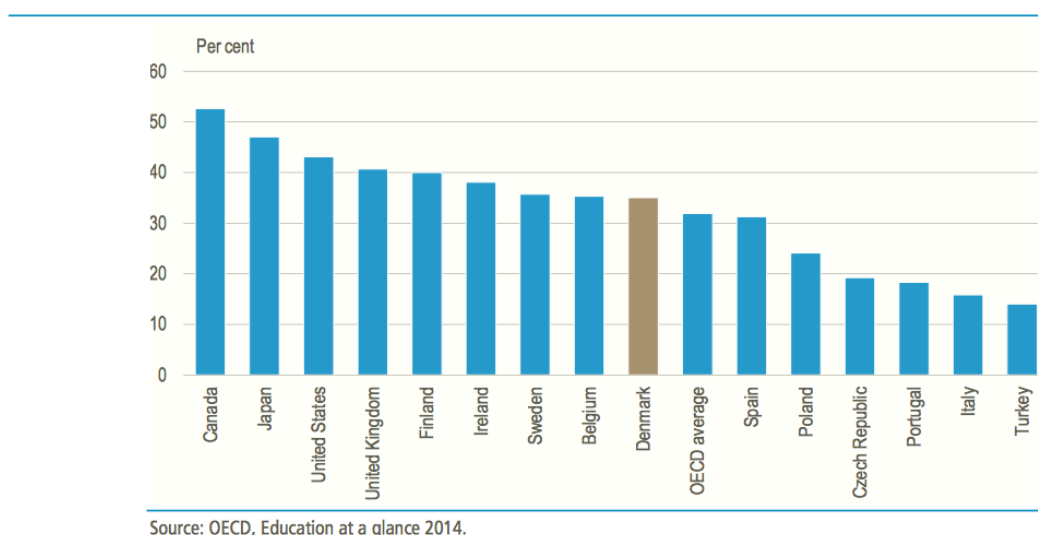
The Danish school system was recently reformed under the Thorning-Schmidt administration with a broad political agreement between all major political parties (KL, 2013). The reform was implemented in August 2014, increasing the number of mandatory hours at school for year 0-9. Furthermore, schools must offer mandatory homework cafés after regular school hours to support weaker students.

Civil society based organisations also offer after school support, i.e. the Red Cross Youth homework cafés covered in the solidarity action inventory for Denmark, operating in many communities across the country. They are independent from schools and the State, but their activities also benefit general school life through the experience of engaging in relationships with their peers (**Red Cross Youth, 2015**).

National performance and social permeability

Ten years after graduating the *Folkeskole* in 2003-04, 47% of the students had completed training providing them with professional qualifications. Education is a significant factor in regards to employment: in the age group 30-69 years 67% were employed, 3% unemployed and 27% outside the workforce and 2% under education (Statistics Denmark, 2015, s. 8). The average Danish child goes through 18.4 years of full-time education, resulting in a national average of 35% of Danes who have completed a higher education (see the figure below).

Figure 9: Persons having completed tertiary education in selected OECD countries. 2012. (Statistics Denmark, 2015, s. 9)



Universities are required to engage with the surrounding community; research and education provided is supposed to help promote growth, welfare and development of society (Legal Information, 2014, s. §2, PCS 3). They should thus preserve and promote vertical solidarity that is the essence of the Danish welfare model.

Until 2002 it was mandatory for all municipalities to provide education in the mother tongue of bilingual children up to the lower secondary level. Since then municipalities can choose. Nearly all (with the exception of Copenhagen) have dropped mother tongue instruction. Should there be a requirement to improve the level of Danish at the beginning of primary school municipalities should offer parents to send their children to free language classes on a voluntary basis. (Open Society Foundations, 2011, p. 83). The 2003 PISA study was the first to reveal the gap in educational performance between ethnic minority and ethnic majority students in Denmark, with higher drop-out rates, mostly

attributed to lack of language skills. The Copenhagen City Council has reacted to continuous underperformance of immigrant children from certain ethnic backgrounds with the “Improved Learning for All” (*Fagligned for alle*) programme, dispersing ethnic minority students to schools with mainly ethnic majority students, and vice versa (Open Society Foundations, 2011, p. 97).

Financing

Both the universities and the upper-secondary level qualify as self-governing educational institutions and are financed via state grants from a taximeter system and their own income-generating activities. However, the state grant covers approx. 80% of the universities’ budget (Ministry for Children, Education & Gender Equality, 2015). All Danish students are entitled to the State’s educational grant (*Statens Uddannelsesstøtte*, SU) to support his or her education. Every student enrolled at a higher education institution can apply and receive the grant for a maximum of 70 grants in total (12 per year). If living with their parents, the student will receive a lower grant. The State Grant for a student enrolled at a university not living at home is 791.29 Euros per month. The Ministry estimates that 300,000 Danish students receive the State Grant every year (Ministry of Higher Education & Science, 2015).

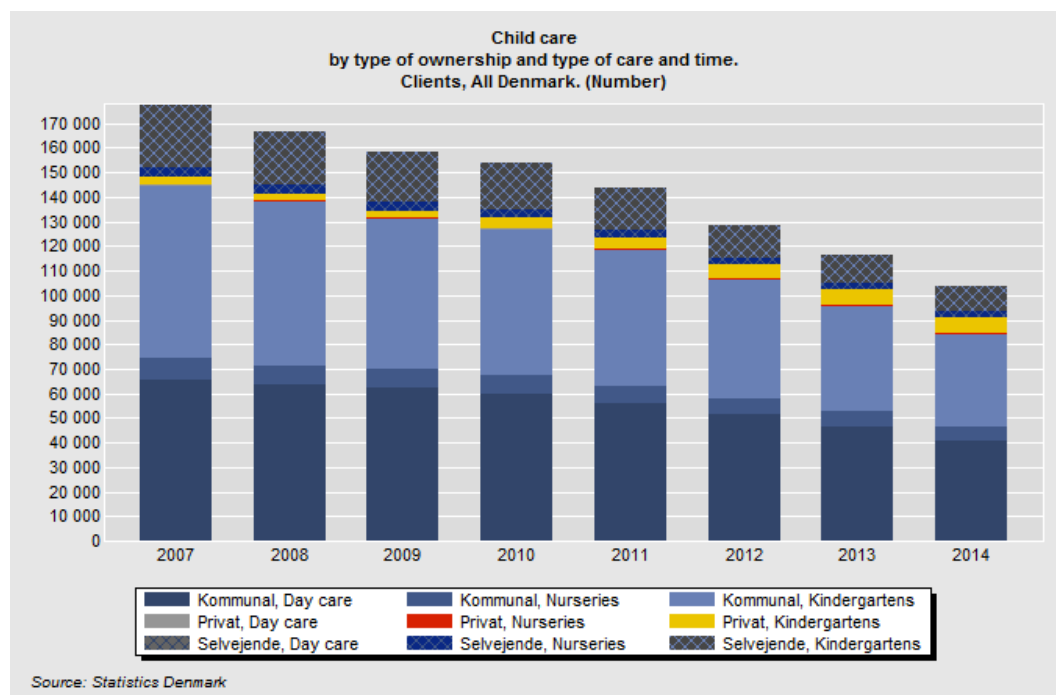
Regional and local responsibilities

The regions are responsible for a number of educational programmes targeting the educational inclusion of people with disabilities, tailored to individual skills and needs (regioner.dk, 2014). However the 2007 health reform shifted more responsibilities to the municipalities, mainly language therapy and training services. If they are unable to provide those they can buy special education services from the regions (regioner.dk, 2014).

Municipalities are responsible for day care, pre-school and primary school education (Legal Information, 2014, s. § 2). They pay a grant; at least 75% of the expenses, to the day care institution and the parents pay a user charge, no more than 25% of the expenses. If the child is mentally or physically disabled, the user charge is halved (Ministry for Children, Education & Equality, 2015). If the parents choose a private institution or provider, the grant from the municipality is reduced.

There is a general increase in private schools in Denmark. They used to be mostly in urban areas, but since the 2007 structural reform rural municipalities have also experienced an increase (Cevea, 2014). In 2014, 16.5% of the Danish children attended a private primary school, compared to 12.1% in 2000. The reason may be that many rural schools were closed in favour of larger schools with more children and re-opened as private schools to preserve the local community and the children’s welfare. Another reason is that the basic school is non-religious and Danish speaking, paving the way for private religious and international schools. In any case, the trend towards parents sending their children to private school might eradicate the solidarity-based ideal of education established by Grundtvig’s principles of equality.

Figure 9: Childcare by type of care and time in Denmark



(Statistics Denmark, 2014)

Municipalities are furthermore responsible for further education, job qualification and teaching quality control to guarantee that “teaching is organized so that students will strengthen their ability to participate actively in a democratic society” (Legal Information, 2011, s. §1). They also develop policies to help finding vocational education, in particular for immigrant youth.

Copenhagen’s 2007 – 2010 Integration Policy included employment as one of six pillars of integration strategy, i.e. supporting the Matching Integration Project (*Matchingprojekt Integration*), helping young people with immigration background to find employment or traineeships through the establishment of partnerships with private enterprises. As of 2010 nearly 500 people had participated in the programme. The target of at least 300 immigrant youth finding a partly publicly financed job, a trainee position or even an ordinary job was only met in part, according to Copenhagen Centre for Orientation and Employment (Open Society Foundations, 2011b).

8 Civic engagement

The section gives an impression of the tradition, culture, scope and impact of civil society in Denmark, supported and sometimes fostered by public policies like the Social Development Programme already mentioned above.

The principles of coproduction and participation are inherent to the Danish welfare state model, where civil society based initiatives have been involved in the provision of welfare services for a long time, i.e. initiated by municipalities, services are contracted out to organisations working with drug addicts, women, people with disabilities etc. The Social Development Programme, running from 1988 to 1993, invested about 47 million Euros in new social service. This was a response to the emergence of new social initiatives, experimenting with more participatory ways of providing social services starting in the late 1960, as a response to what seemed as a too regulatory welfare state (Hulgård, 2008, p. 7). Goal of the programme was the restructuring of social policy to strengthen the role of communities and the third sector. It financed about 1,700 pilot projects all over the country in the areas of work integration and support for disadvantaged and minority groups. Ensuing public initiatives continued to provide funds for civil society initiatives (Bengtsson, 2001), particularly in social policy and urban development. The Danish government developed a National Civil Society Strategy and municipalities increasingly focus on social enterprises as partners in welfare provision.

This development is related to a change from welfare state to welfare society, in which voluntary organisations and individuals on the one hand engage increasingly in the solution and financing of welfare services, leading to welfare pluralism, and where contracting of private entities or the involvement of “voluntary organisations in the solution of specific social problems” create a welfare mix on the other (Boje, 2006, s. 17).

It goes without saying that civil society furthers the democratic development of citizens. Civil society organisations were born in the same period as Denmark changed from monarchy to democracy in 1849, thus inspired by democratic ideals and principles, such as member democracy, the right to assemble, dialogue, foster empowerment, trust and reciprocity between the members and organisations and across social classes (Boje, 2006, s. 17). A range of legal provisions acknowledging the special character of civil society organisations and social enterprises as inherently democratic entities ensures their survival in competition with market-based providers of social services, i.e. special tax rules for non-profit organisations or the recently passed Registered Social Enterprises Act adopted by the Danish parliament in June 2014. The act is part of a policy package consisting of a National Council on Social Enterprise with reference to the Danish government and a Growth Centre for Social Enterprise established inside the Ministry of Business and Growth. These three initiatives adopted by the Danish government in 2014 were all part of a public national strategy to enhance the role of social enterprise. However in October 2015 it was decided to close the Growth Centre by the end of 2015 and reduce the staff servicing the National Council on Social Enterprise to one employee.

The voluntary sector in Denmark

In Danish terms, a voluntary organisation is characterised by five criteria: it is formally organised, independent from the public sector, non-profit, autonomous, engages volunteers and promotes participation. Besides symbolic remunerations, volunteers cannot receive payment for their services. Approx. 35% of the Danish population over the age of 16, a good 3.1 million people, is engaged in voluntary work. The average volunteer spends 17

hours a month, or four hours a week volunteering (frivillighed.dk, 2014). In 2004, there were about 100,200 volunteer-based organisations in Denmark, most of them associations (83,000), followed by private initiatives (8,000), charitable foundations (6,200) and 3,000 nationwide organizations.

The estimated economic value of the voluntary sector is 9.6% of the Danish GDP, or 18.03 billion Euros (2004), mostly through production of services (7.1% of GDP). The value of voluntary unpaid work is 2.5% of GDP (frivillighed.dk, 2014). The voluntary sector mainly generates its income from user payments and grants from the public sector. The most popular areas of volunteering are listed in figure 10.

Fig. 10: Proportion of the Danish population (aged 16 or more), volunteering in the past year, in %

Proportion	Area (Examples)
11%	Sport (sports associations)
5 %	Housing (residents' associations, homeowners' associations)
5 %	Culture (museums, local archives, choir)
5%	Leisure (scouts, hobby associations)
4 %	Health (blood donor, patient associations, counselling)
4%	Education and research (school boards, adult education and leisure education, household associations)
2 %	International activities (humanitarian, peace and solidarity organizations)
2%	Religious (community work, Sunday schools)
2%	Social (senior citizens' associations, shelters, refugee friends, day-care boards)
2%	Professional work and business and professional organizations (trade unions, trade associations, tourist associations))
1 %	Politics and party associations (voters' associations, grassroots organizations)
1%	Environment (nature conservation, animal rights, independent gardens)
1%	Counselling and legal assistance (consumer organizations, human rights, legal aid)

(Friedberg 2014)

At regional level volunteers provide health and social services within clearly defined boundaries. For example, the volunteers cannot do work or take on responsibilities enshrined in legislation, protecting health care jobs and ensuring professional health services (Region Midjylland, n.d.). However, volunteers provide a wide range of services benefitting society at local level, national and international level, some of which will be represented in the SOLIDUS solidarity action inventory. It takes every shape an form, from very local initiatives involving just a few people, like the Container to Lesbos

initiative collecting and sending several containers worth of goods to support refugees stranded on the Greek island of Lesbos in summer 2015, to support networks like the Red Cross Youth homework cafes that operate across the country.

During the current refugee crisis, it is mostly volunteers who provide support to refugees who make it to Denmark. As solidarity-based support from the state sector is limited, it is bottom-up horizontal expressions of solidarity, unrelated to the solidarity structures embedded within the Danish welfare state founded on a notion of national unity and homogeneity.

9 Conclusion

Vertical solidarity is embedded in the Danish welfare state, based on principles of equality and lifelong learning and the notion of an “imagined community” constituted by bridges of social capital that is larger than family, immediate neighbours and local communities. There is a long tradition of cooperation with a vibrant civil society sector producing horizontal solidarity, thus feeding solidarity innovation bottom-up reflected in policy programmes.

We see a longstanding trend away from the all-encompassing welfare state – even pushed by social initiatives themselves – to paying for services, making room for new types of actors which can still be third sector based (and thus new examples of the solidarity-based tradition of old cooperative movements), social enterprises or private providers. While the first maintain a link to traditional third sector – the social mission is their central purpose, they reinvest profits in the mission and they are democratically governed – and thus to solidarity-based ecosystem, the growing number of private providers in social services, health and education might pose a threat to vertical solidarity originally promised by the state.

A real test for solidarity actions in response to crisis is the on-going refugee crisis and the tendency to cut welfare benefits in general and for refugees and immigrants in particular. There is clearly a tendency of the state largely withdrawing its support and thus increasing the polarization between Danish citizens and refugees and immigrants with respect to entitlements to social services and citizenship rights. Apart from the humanitarian crisis this can be a relevant process to observe during SOLIDUS project duration how much grassroots solidarity can influence policy responses in a field that calls upon notions of solidarity outside the “imagined community”.

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